

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Original) A method for accessing a plurality of bi-directional services are transmitted over a cable television network, comprising:

presenting a program guide to at least one subscriber of a cable television network, wherein the program guide displays at least one of a plurality of bi-directional services offered over the cable television network;

populating a bi-directional services database with information related to the bi-directional services displayed in the program guide;

receiving a request from a subscriber for a bi-directional service displayed in the program guide;

querying the bi-directional services database to determine whether the bi-directional service requested by the subscriber is available for consumption in a manner requested by the subscriber;

rendering the bi-directional service requested by the subscriber; and

updating the bi-directional services database to reflect that the bi-directional service requested by the subscriber has been rendered.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving a request from a subscriber for a bi-directional service comprises a bi-directional communication session between the subscriber and a content provider.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving a request from a subscriber for a bi-directional service comprises a bi-directional communication session concurrently between a content provider and a plurality of subscribers.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving a request from a subscriber for a bi-directional service comprises a bi-directional communication session between the subscriber and at least one other subscriber.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving a request from a subscriber for a bi-directional service comprises a real-time bi-directional communication session between the subscriber and a content provider.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving a request from a subscriber for a bi-directional service comprises a request of a bi-directional communication service for future consumption.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving a request from a subscriber for a bi-directional service comprises one of a plurality of instantiations of a bi-directional service offered by a content provider.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein querying the bi-directional services database to determine whether the bi-directional service requested by the subscriber is available comprises querying the bi-directional services database to determine whether an instantiation of the bi-directional service requested by the subscriber is available.

9. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein updating the bi-directional services database to reflect that the bi-directional service requested by the subscriber has been rendered comprises updating the bi-directional services database to reflect that an instantiation of the bi-directional service requested by the subscriber has been rendered.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising sending a denial of service message to the subscriber if the bi-directional service requested by the subscriber is not available.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising prompting the subscriber to request another bi-directional service if the bi-directional service requested by the subscriber is not available.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising prompting the subscriber to reserve the bi-directional service for another time if the bi-directional service requested by the subscriber is not available.

13. (Original) A method for accessing a plurality of bi-directional services over a cable television network comprising the steps of:

populating a bi-directional services database with information related to a plurality of bi-directional services;

sending the bi-directional services database to a home terminal of a first subscriber of a cable television network;

presenting a program guide to the first subscriber of the cable television network via the home terminal, wherein the program guide displays at least one of a plurality of bi-directional services;

receiving a request from the first subscriber for a bi-directional service displayed in the program guide;

querying the bi-directional services database to determine whether the bi-directional service requested by the first subscriber is available;

rendering the bi-directional service requested by the first subscriber;

generating an updated bi-directional services database to reflect that the bi-directional service requested by the first subscriber has been rendered; and

transmitting the updated bi-directional services database to a second subscriber.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein transmitting the updated bi-directional services database to a second subscriber occurs on a scheduled basis.

15. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein populating a bi-directional services database includes populating an availability table of entries, each entry respectively associated with a bi-directional service and each entry indicating whether the associated bi-directional service is available.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein querying the bi-directional services database to determine whether the bi-directional service requested by the first subscriber is available comprises querying an availability table entry in the availability table of entries that is associated with the bi-directional service requested by the first user.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein generating an updated bi-directional services database to reflect that the bi-directional service requested by the first subscriber has been rendered comprises updating the availability table entry in the availability table of entries that is associated with the bi-directional service requested by the first user.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein transmitting the updated bi-directional services database to a second subscriber comprises transmitting the availability table of entries to the second subscriber.

19. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein transmitting the updated bi-directional services database to a second subscriber comprises transmitting the availability table entry associated with the bi-directional service requested by the first user.

20. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein populating a bi-directional services database with information related to a plurality of bi-directional services comprises populating the bi-directional services database with at least one of a bi-directional service title, a bi-directional service content description, a bi-directional service category, the identity of the content provider that provides the bi-directional service, a description of the people that fulfill the bi-directional service and bi-directional service rating information.

21-31. (Canceled)